

responsible, and uphold the equal rights of all Egyptian citizens.

PRIVATE FIRST CLASS DAVID A. DRAKE

(Mr. COFFMAN of Colorado asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. COFFMAN of Colorado. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to honor a soldier who made the ultimate sacrifice and laid down his life for our freedom: United States Army Private First Class David A. Drake.

Private First Class Drake enlisted in the United States Army in January 2011. In the Army, he served as a combat engineer, leading from the front with his unit, the 515th Engineer Company, 5th Engineer Battalion, 4th Maneuver Enhancement Brigade, and deployed in support of Operation Enduring Freedom. On September 28, 2011, he gave his life in Ghazni province, Afghanistan, conducting operations against the enemy.

David is remembered not only for his heroics on the battlefield, but for the tremendous impact he had on his family, friends, and his community. His brother recalls David's absolute devotion to others in describing why he joined the Army. "For him, it was pride in serving our country, serving the people, keeping our freedom." His character and patriotism are an example for us all.

Private First Class David Andrew Drake personifies the honor and selflessness of service in the United States Army. His bravery and dedication to duty will not be forgotten. As a Marine Corps combat veteran, my deepest sympathies go out to his family, his fellow soldiers, and to all who knew him.

SENIORS TASK FORCE: ENTITLEMENTS AND THE SUPERCOMMITTEE

(Ms. MATSUI asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. MATSUI. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to voice my support for older Americans and pledge to protect the program they have paid into, have been promised and deserve.

Throughout much of the year, we have heard how Congress needs to cut Medicare, Medicaid, and Social Security benefits under the guise of deficit reduction. I reject that premise.

I do so for Dale, a Sacramento resident, who, at 70 years old, recently retired with his wife. The dream of retirement went well for a short while, then utility and home repair bills started piling up. And if this weren't enough, both Dale and his wife have suffered deteriorating health, which has increased their medical bills to levels they cannot afford. Cuts to Medicare or Social Security would, as Dale

put it, "take from the poorest of the poor."

That is unacceptable. Any proposal to meet our deficit must meet the test of protecting our seniors.

THE IMPORTANCE OF PRAYER

(Mr. FORBES asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. FORBES. Mr. Speaker, I rise today on behalf of the Congressional Prayer Caucus to note the importance of prayer in our Nation's history. On October 12, 1844, 167 years ago today, John Chambers, the Governor of Iowa Territory, issued a proclamation declaring a day of Thanksgiving to God.

Chambers said, in part, "I have deemed it proper to recommend a day of general Thanksgiving to Almighty God for the many and great blessings we enjoy as a people and individually, and of prayer and supplications for the continuance of His mercy and goodness towards us; and for the prosperity, happiness, and ultimate salvation of the American people.

"We are told that 'righteousness exalteth a nation' and are taught by divine authority that the voice of thanksgiving and prayer is acceptable to our Father in Heaven. Let us then unite our voices in the humble hope that they will reach the Throne of Grace and obtain for us a continuation and increase of blessings."

□ 1210

PHYSICIAN ASSISTANT WEEK

(Ms. BASS of California asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. BASS of California. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize National Physician Assistant Week, which is observed annually from October 6 through October 12.

On October 6, 1967, the first PAs graduated from Duke University. Today, more than 40 years later, legions of practicing PAs have reached the number of over 83,000, and 307 million patients visited PAs last year alone. I know firsthand the key role of the PA profession in the delivery of care. Before serving in office, I worked for nearly a decade as a PA and served as a clinical instructor who trained future PAs.

Created in response to a shortage of primary care physicians, the PA profession today is crucial to developing a strong primary care workforce. Not only do PAs provide high-quality, cost-effective care in virtually all health care settings, but PAs also extend the reach of medicine to underserved communities throughout the U.S. With health care reform expanding access to 33 million Americans, PAs are needed now more than ever.

Mr. Speaker, as we mark the final day of PA week, I ask my colleagues to join me in celebrating the contribu-

tion, as well as the promise, of the PA profession.

FREE AMERICA TO TRADE FREELY WITH COLOMBIA

(Mr. POE of Texas asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. POE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, the House today will vote on a jobs plan that will create thousands of jobs for Americans. I'm talking about the pending free trade agreement with Colombia that has been waiting for years to be voted on.

In my great home State of Texas, new jobs will be created in the exporting sectors like petroleum, chemicals, and machinery. Texas is the number one State that exports to Colombia, but in my district alone, the 22 companies that exported to Colombia last year paid almost \$12 million in unnecessary tariffs. When tariffs on these products are removed, United States companies will be able to expand their markets, export more products, and create American jobs; and America will become more of a competitive country in the international marketplace.

I've been to Colombia, and unlike some South Americans, Colombians like Americans. They are a U.S. ally. Free trade with Colombia helps both nations and solidifies our joint interests in South America. This agreement is a diplomatic win to help thwart the influence of dictator Chavez of Venezuela in that region.

Create jobs. Pass the free trade agreement with Colombia. It's good for Americans, and it's good for Colombians.

And that's just the way it is.

SOCIAL SECURITY, MEDICARE, AND MEDICAID

(Mr. CICILLINE asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. CICILLINE. Social Security, Medicaid, and Medicare were created because they reflect the values of our country. We should be incredibly proud of these programs, which provide a vital safety net for our seniors, and we should commit ourselves to strengthening them.

There are seniors like Rita Manley, in my district, who depend on Social Security, Medicare, and Medicaid. Rita is 82 years old, suffering from cancer. She lives in Central Falls, Rhode Island. She was recently laid off from her job at the Central Falls Housing Authority, and relies on Social Security for income and Medicare to cover her medication, which costs about \$400 a month. Rita would not be able to afford her cancer medication without the support of Medicare.

We should do everything we can to protect and strengthen Social Security, Medicare, and Medicaid for seniors like Rita all across this country. Our seniors deserve and have earned